

REPORT of the MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH to the RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL of WILTON for the Year ending 31st December, 1909.

GENTLEMEN,

At the census of 1901 the population of the Wilton Rural District was 7,467, and it had increased at Midsummer, 1909, to 8,369, as estimated by the excess of births over deaths in the intervening period.

The area of the district (excluding water) is 54,074, and this gives 6·4 acres to each inhabitant. The number of inhabited houses is 1,876, being an increase of 25 over last year. The accommodation ratio is one house to 4·4 inhabitants.

Samples of water taken from the public water-supplies of Bemerton, Quidhampton, and Fovant have been examined and were of a satisfactory standard of purity. There are now 353 houses served by the mains of the Bemerton Waterworks. During last year 21 samples of drinking water were taken for analysis from the parishes of Barford St. Martin, Bemerton, Bowerchalke, Broadchalke, Fovant, South Newton, Steeple Langford, Wiley, and Wishford. Three wells were closed as polluted, 6 wells were cleansed and repaired, and 18 new wells were sunk. Sixty-one additional houses have been connected with public supplies. Dinton has this year had a public supply provided for the village. There has always been a difficulty hitherto with the shallow wells there, and this promises to be an improvement of great value.

Samples of Food and Drugs are taken by a special officer appointed by the County Council. No case of unwholesome or adulterated food has come under my own notice.

Twenty-five new houses have been erected during the year, and the water-supply of each house or block was examined before occupation certificates were granted. Fourteen houses which had become dilapidated were again made fit for habitation, and 61 houses were cleansed and limewashed. One case of overcrowding was abated. In that portion of the district in which Urban Byelaws are in force the Surveyor has examined and passed the plans of the new buildings after securing due observance of the building regulations.

During the year the drains of 43 houses have been laid or re-laid, while 22 have had defects remedied. Nine additional W.C.'s have been provided, and 22 privies have been converted into pail closets. With one slight temporary interruption, which was soon repaired, the Bemerton Sewage scheme has worked smoothly. The scavenging has been well done and 217 loads of refuse have been removed from 346 houses by the officers of the Council.

The Slaughter-houses have been inspected and two were ordered to be cleansed and repaired.

The Dairies and Cowsheds have been under systematic observation and their condition is one of steady improvement. Provision for the washing of milker's hands and the soiled udders of cows is now almost universal, and the refrigerating and churn accommodation is in many cases improved and has been cut off from any connection with pigsties or other sources of possible impurity. The lighting, ventilation, cubic space and limewashing of the sheds have received consideration, but the pitching of the yards is still in many places in want of repairs, and leads to unnecessary fouling of the udders. Wherever there has been a case of infectious disease all persons in any way liable to carry infection have been excluded from dairy work. On two occasions the Veterinary Examiners of the London County Council notified to me cows suffering from tubercular disease of the udder, in dairies sending milk to London. In each case the cow was promptly isolated from the rest of the herd and kept under observation until the milk was dried off and the cow sold as a barren. Both cows were sold to be grazed out of the County. One hundred and eight persons are engaged in the milk trade and forty-eight dairies are registered. In seven cases it became necessary to serve notices for contravention of the bye-laws relating to Dairies.

During the year 49 cases of Infectious Disease were notified. Ten were cases of diphtheria, occurring in the Villages of Bemerton and Burcombe, and in the Hamlet of Bathampton. As the County Laboratory is closed I availed myself of the permission of your Council to get the necessary bacteriological work done in London. In each case in which the bacillus of diphtheria was found a supply of antitoxin was also sent. Scarlatina of a very mild type was prevalent in Little Langford, Grovely, Steeple Langford, Barford St. Martin, Compton Chamberlayne, Wishford, Wiley, Bemerton, Fisherton Delamere, and South Newton. Thirty-eight cases in all were notified. Some of these I found peeling, the parents having failed to take any notice of the slight illness that had preceded. Where members of these families were engaged in baking or dairy work they were either stopped from work or got away into lodgings until disinfection had taken place. Five cases of Erysipelas occurred during the year and the necessary precautions were taken to prevent its spread.

The Hospital for Infectious Diseases has not yet been erected. The joint provisional arrangement for small-pox accommodation on Coombe Down still continues.

Fifty-seven Factories, Workshops and Bakehouses were inspected and eight were certified for limewashing. Two insanitary conditions in these were dealt with.

Among the deaths registered 1 was due to Diphtheria, 4 to Epidemic Influenza, 8 to Phthisis, and 1 to other Tubercular Disease, 9 to Cancer and 20 to Heart Diseases.

The number of deaths registered from all causes was 97, giving a crude death-rate of 11·5 per 1,000. To these must be added 6 deaths of inhabitants, residents of the Asylum, beyond the district, which gives a corrected death-rate of 12·3 per 1,000. The corrected death-rate last year was 12·7 per 1,000, and the average crude death-rate of the last ten years is 11·5 per 1,000.

There were only 4 deaths under one year of age, so that the Infantile Mortality is equal to 24 per 1,000 births. The average of the last ten years was 80 per 1,000 births.

During the year 132 notices have been served, of which 116 have already been complied with and 16 are outstanding or unexpired.

The streams and water-courses are in good order.

The Burial grounds are well cared for, of sufficient area, and in no case injurious to adjoining dwellings.

There are no Common Lodging Houses registered in the district.

The Medical Inspection of School Children was carried out by the resident medical officers of the district until July last, when the work was handed over by the Education Committee of the County Council to two whole-time Inspectors not engaged in general medical practice. For the future these two gentlemen will carry out the duties hitherto performed by the County Medical Officer of Health and the local Medical Officers of Health in the work of School Inspection. During the year in which I took part in this work in the rural district schools I examined and recorded the condition of 325 children. Their height, weight, state of clothing and boots, and their previous illnesses were noted; also their present mental and bodily condition; any abnormalities of their eyes, ears, throats, teeth, heart, lungs, nervous system; spinal or other deformities; their condition as to cleanliness and freedom from parasites of the hair or skin; in ringworm cases microscopic examinations were made wherever the cure was doubtful. The work of Medical Inspection is a branch of medical police, not of medical treatment; and in any case in which it was found that the child was not under such medical or surgical care as was necessary the County Medical Officer sent a card to the parents recommending them to obtain advice for the child in the particular trouble found on inspection to be present. Where parents are unable to afford medical attendance in the usual way, dispensaries and other provident institutions are generally available; but failing these a parent would be held, under the Children's Act, to be guilty of cruelty who did not avail himself of the medical assistance supplied gratuitously by the Guardians. By calling the attention of parents early to defects in the eyes, ears, lungs, mouth, throat, heart, or spine, much future harm to the child is avoided, and as a rule parents appear to appreciate the opportunities thus given them to discover these defects.

The number of births in 1909 was 166, giving a birth-rate of 19·8 per 1,000. The average birth-rate of the last ten years was 22·3 per 1,000.

In no case were legal proceedings necessary. I append the usual statistical tables and a summary of the work done in the Sanitary Inspector's Department.

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Lic. San. Sci. Durh.

TABLE I.—WILTON RURAL DISTRICT.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1909 and previous years.

YEAR.	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.				Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institu- tions beyond the District.	Nett deaths at all Ages belong- ing to the District.	
				Under 1 year of age.		At all ages.				
		Number.	*Rate.	Number.	Rate per 1,000 Births registered.	Number.	Rate.*		Number	Rate.*
1899	8438	180	21·3	15	83	111	13·1			
1900	8507	188	21·8	19	101	132	15·4			
1901	7467	180	24·0	14	77	107	14·3			
1902	7572	180	23·7	22	133	116	15·3			
1903	7666	174	22·6	6	63	80	10·4			
1904	7727	158	20·4	12	76	97	12·5			
1905	8083	159	19·6	11	69	100	12·3			
1906	8128	204	24·9	13	63	105	12·8			
1907	8211	175	21·3	10	57	92	11·2			
1908	8300	195	23·4	17	87	103	12·4			
Averages for years 1899-1908	8009	179	22·3	13	80	104	12·9			
1909	8369	166	19·8	4	24	97	11·5	6	103 12·3	

*Rates calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

Area of District in aeres
(exclusive of area covered by water).

} 54,074

Total population at all ages, 7,467
Number of inhabited houses, 1,715
Average number of persons per house, 4·3

} At
Census of
1901.

TABLE II.—*Vital Statistics of Separate Localities in 1909 and previous years.*

YEAR.	NAMES OF LOCALITIES.							
	Wilton sub-district.			Bishopstone sub-district			Workhouse.	
	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.
1905	77	42		82	39		...	19
1906	119	41		84	51		1	13
1907	104	40		71	37		...	15
1908	113	50		78	40		4	12
1909	81	38	1	85	45	3	...	14

TABLE III.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year 1909 in the Wilton Rural District.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.				CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.					
				At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.				
					Under 1	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.
Diphtheria	...	...	...	10	...	2	3	1	2
Erysipelas	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	38	1	8	25	4	...
TOTALS	...	...	...	49	1	10	28	5	3

Isolation Hospital—none, except for Small-pox.

TABLE IV.—*Causes of, and Ages at, Death during 1909, in the the Wilton Rural District.*

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths at the subjoined ages of “Residents” whether occurring in or beyond the District.							Deaths at all Ages of “Residents” belonging to Localities, whether occurring in or beyond the District.		
	All ages	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and up-wards	Wilton.	Bishop-stone.	Work-house.
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Epidemic Influenza	4	...	...	1	...	...	3	2	2	...
Enteritis	1	...	...	...	..	...	1	...	1	...
Gastritis	3	1	1	...	1	...	...	..	3	...
Phthisis	8	...	...	1	...	7	...	5	3	...
Other tuberculous diseases	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Cancer, malignant disease	9	...	...	...	...	4	5	5	3	1
Bronchitis	4	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	3	1
Pneumonia	2	...	1	...	...	..	1	2	...	...
Other diseases of Respiratory organs	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
Premature birth	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	...
Heart Diseases	20	...	...	...	...	6	14	4	13	3
Accidents	2	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	2	...
All other causes	38	...	2	...	...	7	29	16	13	9
All causes	97	4	7	2	1	27	56	38	45	14

TABLE V.—*Infantile Mortality during the year 1909, in the Wilton Rural District.*
Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 week.	2—3 weeks.	3—4 weeks.	Total under 1 month.	3—4 months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
Gastritis ...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Premature birth	1	1	1	3	...	3
	1	1	1	3	1	4
Births in the year { legitimate 163 } 166 Deaths { legitimate 4 } illegitimate 3 illegitimate —						

Summary of Work done in Sanitary Inspector's Department of the Wilton Rural District during the year ending 31st December, 1909.

Prevention of Infectious Disease under direction of Medical Officer of Health.

No. of Cases inquired into	...	38
No. of Houses Disinfected and Cleansed		39

Houses.

No. erected	...	25
No. made fit for Habitation	...	14
No. Cleansed and Limewashed	...	61

Overcrowding.

No. of Cases Abated	...	1
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House Drains.

No. Laid or re-laid	...	43
No. Cleansed, Trapped and Ventilated		7
No. of Defective Waste Pipes rectified		5
No. of Dumbwells rectified	...	2

Water Closets.

No. of additional W.C.'s provided	...	9
No. Repaired, Ventilated and supplied with Flush Cisterns	...	3

Privies and Ashpits.

No. converted to Pail-closets	...	22
No. Repaired	...	5

Scavenging.

Total No. of Houses from which Refuse is Removable by the Authority	346
Total No. of Loads of Ashes and Refuse removed	217
No. of New Dust Receptacles provided	9

Water Supply.

No. of Wells sunk	...	18
No. of Wells cleansed and repaired	...	6
No. of Wells closed as polluted	...	3
No. of Houses Supplied from Waterworks (during year)	...	61
No. of Samples taken for Analysis	...	21

Slaughter Houses.

No. Regularly Inspected	...	3
No. Cleansed and Repaired	...	2

Dairies and Cowsheds.

No. Registered	...	48
No. of Persons engaged in Milk Trade now on Register and under Supervision	108	
No. of Contraventions of Acts, Orders, and Bye-laws dealt with	...	7

Factories, Workshops and Bakehouses.

No. under Inspection	...	...	57
No. Certified for Lime-washing by Inspector			8
No. of Insanitary Conditions dealt with as Nuisances	2

Accumulation of Offensive Refuse.

No. of Removals	...	4
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Clerical Work.

No. of preliminary Notices served	...	132
No. of Notices Complied with	...	116
No. of Notices Outstanding	...	16

(Signed) R. A. SKELTON.